

## The Civics Assessment

The NAEP civics assessment encompasses three interrelated components: civics knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions. The knowledge component of the assessment is expressed in five fundamental questions:

- What are civic life, politics, and government?
- What are the foundations of the American political system?
- How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?
- What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?
- What are the roles of citizens in American democracy?

The NAEP civics assessment is also designed to measure the intellectual and participatory skills students need to face the challenges of public life in a constitutional democracy. Central among these are the abilities to describe, explain, and analyze information and arguments, and to evaluate, take, and defend positions on public issues. The third area of the assessment, civic dispositions and participatory skills, refers to the rights and responsibilities of citizens as members of society.

The assessment is made up of multiple-choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed-response questions. The constructed-response questions make up approximately 40 percent of the assessment time. For more information regarding the civics assessment framework please visit <http://nagb.org>.

### ***NAEP Civics Framework Distribution of Question Pool Across Areas of Civic Knowledge***

<b>Grade</b>	Civic life, politics, and government	Foundations of the American political system	The Constitution and the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy	Relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs	Roles of citizens in American democracy
12	10%	20%	25%	20%	25%

## The U.S. History Assessment

The assessment is organized around three concepts or dimensions: major themes of U.S. history, chronological periods of U.S. history, and ways of knowing and thinking about U.S. history. The themes and periods of U.S. history function as a matrix, with the assessment addressing the role of the themes across the periods.

### ***NAEP U.S. History Distribution of Question Pool Across Historical Themes:***

Grade	Themes			
	Change & Continuity in American Democracy	Gathering & Interactions of Peoples, Cultures, & Ideas	Economic & Technological Changes & Their Relation to Society, Ideas, & the Environment	Changing Role of America in the World
12	25%	25%	25%	25%

Eight chronological periods that overlap and vary in depth of coverage are included in the assessment:

- Beginnings to 1607;
- Colonization, settlement, and communities (1607 to 1763);
- The Revolution and the new nation (1763 to 1815);
- Expansion and reform (1801 to 1861);
- Crisis of the Union: Civil War and Reconstruction (1850 to 1877);
- The development of modern America (1865 to 1920);
- Modern America and the World Wars (1914 to 1945);
- Contemporary America (1945 to present).

Questions include multiple-choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed-response formats. Constructed-response questions make up approximately 50% of the assessment. The cognitive dimension of historical thinking is measured by the inclusion of test questions divided between those measuring historical knowledge and perspective (30%) and those measuring historical analysis and interpretation (70%). Many questions in the assessment are based on visual or textual stimuli. At Grade 12, a portion of the assessment questions may be organized around a single historical issue. For more information regarding the U.S. History assessment framework please visit <http://nagb.org>.

## Civics and U.S. History Booklet Directions

In each of the next two sections, you will have 25 minutes to answer a series of questions about history or civics. You should think carefully about your answers, and you should use the entire 25 minutes to complete each section.

You will be asked to respond to several different types of questions. Some of the questions will require you to choose the best answer and fill in the oval for that answer in your booklet.

For other questions, you will be asked to write short answers on the blank lines provided in your booklet. Here is an example of a question that requires you to provide a short answer.

### Example 1

Who was Thomas Jefferson and why was he important? Try to identify two reasons.

*Jefferson was the third U.S. President. He was the main writer of the Declaration of Independence and he bought the Louisiana territory from France.*

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Also, you will be asked to answer other questions by writing longer, more detailed responses on a full page of blank lines. For example, here is a question that requires you to provide a longer answer.

Example 2

Explain three reasons why the early English settlers of New England left home to journey to North America.

The early English settlers left home for three reasons. Many of them wanted religious freedom because the King would not let them practice their faiths. Some were looking for more land or a way to make a better living because they were poor or hadn't inherited any land. Others hoped to set up a whole new society better than the one they left behind.

When you are asked to write your response be sure that your handwriting is clear. Think carefully about each question and make your answers as complete as possible, using as many lines as you need.

Finally, in some questions you may be asked to draw maps, graphs, charts, tables, or timelines.

If you finish before time is called, be sure to read your work again and change anything that you think will make your answers better.



## Sample Civics Questions

### Grade 12

1. The right to counsel, which is guaranteed to a person arrested for committing a crime, means the right to be
  - ☒ Represented by a lawyer
  - ☐ Protected against self-incrimination
  - ☐ Protected against search and seizure
  - ☐ Free from being tried twice for the same crime
  
2. Which of the following best describes the way in which the United States Constitution assigns governmental power?
  - ☐ It assigns it entirely to the states
  - ☐ It assigns it entirely to the national government
  - ☒ It divides it between the states and the national government
  - ☐ It divides it between the states and the federal courts

3. According to the United States Constitution, which of the following has the power to declare war?
- ☐ Ⓐ United States Supreme Court
  - ☒ Ⓑ United States Congress
  - ☐ Ⓒ United Nations
  - ☐ Ⓓ Joint Chiefs of Staff
4. The procedure by which a candidate is nominated for President of the United States is established by
- ☐ Ⓐ Congressional legislation
  - ☐ Ⓑ The United States Constitution
  - ☐ Ⓒ The Bill of Rights
  - ☒ Ⓓ Political parties

Question 5 refers to the descriptions below of two different electoral systems.

Most democratic countries elect legislatures through one of two types of electoral systems: single-member district or proportional representation. In single-member district systems, citizens in specific areas vote for candidates who represent their districts. In proportional representation systems, citizens in the country vote for political parties. Parties are then awarded seats in the legislature proportionate to the percentage of the vote they have won. In other words, if a party wins 20 percent of the vote, it receives 20 percent of the seats in the legislature.

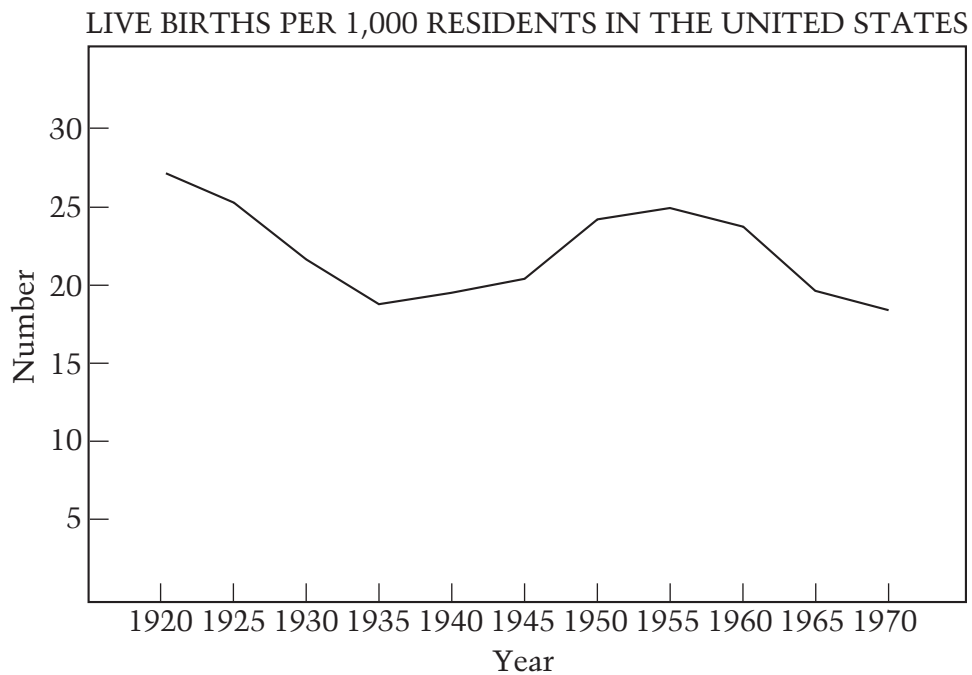
5. Which of the following is the best argument that a single-member district system is better than a proportional representation system?
- ☒ Ⓐ Voters should make choices about individual candidates, as they do in single-member district systems, rather than simply vote for a party.
  - ☐ Ⓑ Single-member district systems lead to stronger political parties, which are good for democracy.
  - ☐ Ⓒ Single-member district systems are better at representing the interests of minorities.
  - ☐ Ⓓ Voters will make wiser choices if they focus on national issues, as they do in single-member district systems, rather than on local issues, as they tend to do in proportional representation systems.



## Sample U.S. History Questions

### Grade 12

1. A consequence of Prohibition was
  - Ⓐ The failure of the Republicans in the 1928 presidential election
  - The growth of organized crime
  - Ⓒ The turning of public attention to pressing international issues
  - Ⓓ Widespread popular support for further moral reform
  
2. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's goal in supporting the Lend-Lease Act of 1941 was to
  - Ⓐ Encourage Japanese Americans to relocate voluntarily
  - Ⓑ Use foreign investment as a way of stimulating the American economy
  - Ⓒ Maintain an isolationist stance by providing only limited aid to both sides in the European conflict
  - Assist Britain's war effort without violating United States neutrality laws



3. The graph above supports which statement about the birthrate in the United States?
- Ⓐ It declined steadily from 1920 to 1950.
  - Ⓑ It increased rapidly during the great Depression.
  - It increased after the Second World War.
  - Ⓓ It tended to increase after each war.



4. • Increases in automobile ownership  
• Building of a modern highway system  
• Tax deductions for mortgage interest

Explain how one of the factors listed above contributed to the growth of suburbs.

*The increase in automobile ownership allowed people to get out of the dark cities and into the peaceful suburbs. They were able to commute to and from work in their cars and not have the hassle of city living.*

5. In the 1970's the United States economy was directly affected by
- A sharp increase in the price of oil
  - Ⓐ An increase in the cost of solar energy
  - Ⓒ An overall decline in international trade
  - Ⓓ A rapid decline in prices of consumer goods
6. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact are best described as two
- Ⓐ Organizations founded by the European Economic Community to promote trade between Europe and the United States
  - Ⓑ Treaties negotiated between the allies and the Central Powers at Versailles after the First World War
  - Ⓒ Bodies established by the United Nations to promote peace within multiethnic European countries such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia
  - Military organizations made up, respectively, of the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies during the Cold War



# Student Background Questionnaire

## General Directions for Grade 12

In the next two sections, you will be asked questions about yourself and your education. The choices for some questions will be written across the page as shown. Fill in the oval for the best answer.

### Example 1

	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day
1. How often do you watch movies on TV?	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D

You should have filled in the oval below the answer that best tells how often you watch movies on TV.

The choices for some questions will be written down the page as shown. Now read Example 2 and indicate your answer.

### Example 2

2. Which event would you prefer to attend?
<input type="radio"/> A basketball game
<input type="radio"/> B car show
<input type="radio"/> C concert
<input type="radio"/> D play

Make your answer mark clear and dark in the oval. If you make a mistake or want to change your answer, be sure to completely erase any unwanted marks.



**Do not go past the** sign at the end of each section until you are told to do so. If you finish before time is called, go back and check your work on that section only. Use your time carefully. Do as much as you can in each section.



## Student Background Questionnaire

In this section, please tell us about yourself and your family. The section has 14 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet.

VB331330

VB331331

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? Fill in one or more ovals.

- ☐ Ⓐ No, I am not Hispanic or Latino.
- ☐ Ⓑ Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano.
- ☐ Ⓒ Yes, I am Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American.
- ☐ Ⓓ Yes, I am Cuban or Cuban American.
- ☐ Ⓔ Yes, I am from some other Hispanic or Latino background.

2. Which of the following best describes you? Fill in **one or more ovals**.

- ☐ Ⓐ White
- ☐ Ⓑ Black or African American
- ☐ Ⓒ Asian
- ☐ Ⓓ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Ⓔ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

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For the rest of the questions in this section, fill in only **one** oval for each question.

VB331333

3. Does your family get a newspaper at least four times a week?

☐ A Yes  
☐ B No  
☐ C don't know.

VB331337

7. Is there an encyclopedia in your home? It could be a set of books, or it could be on the computer.

☐ A Yes  
☐ B No  
☐ C don't know.

VB331334

4. Does your family get any magazines regularly?

☐ A Yes  
☐ B No  
☐ C I don't know.

TB001101

8. About how many pages a day do you have to read in school and for homework?

☐ A 5 or fewer  
☐ B 6–10  
☐ C 11–15  
☐ D 16–20  
☐ E More than 20

VB331335

5. About how many books are there in your home?

☐ A Few (0–10)  
☐ B Enough to fill one shelf (11–25)  
☐ C Enough to fill one bookcase (26–100)  
☐ D Enough to fill several bookcases (more than 100)

VB331339

9. How often do you talk about things you have studied in school with someone in your family?

☐ A Never or hardly ever  
☐ B Once every few weeks  
☐ C About once a week  
☐ D Two or three times a week  
☐ E Every day

VB331336

6. Is there a computer at home that you use?

☐ A Yes  
☐ B No

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VB331447

10. How many days were you absent from school in the last month?

- Ⓐ None
- Ⓐ 1 or 2 days
- Ⓑ 3 or 4 days
- Ⓒ 5 to 10 days
- Ⓓ More than 10 days

VB330870

11. How far in school did your mother go?

- Ⓐ She did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ She graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ She had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ She graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB330871

12. How far in school did your father go?

- Ⓐ He did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ He graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ He had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ He graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB331451

13. How often do people in your home talk to each other in a language other than English?

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Once in a while
- Ⓒ About half of the time
- Ⓓ All or most of the time

HE002549

14. Which of the following best describes your high school program?

- Ⓐ General
- Ⓑ Academic or college preparatory
- Ⓒ Vocational or technical



# Student Background Questionnaire

## Civics—Grade 12

ID10027

1. In what grade(s) have you studied civics or government? Fill in **all** ovals that apply.

- a. Grade 9 ☐
- b. Grade 10 ☐
- c. Grade 11 ☐
- d. Grade 12 ☐

ID100216

2. During this school year, have you studied any of the following topics? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes	No	I don't know
a. The United States Constitution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Congress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The President and the cabinet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. How laws are made	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. The court system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Political parties, elections, and voting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. State and local government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Other countries' governments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. International organizations (such as the United Nations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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ID100234

3. Do you do any of the following when you study civics or government? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes	No	I don't know
a. Read from your textbook	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
b. Memorize material you have read	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
c. Read extra material not in your textbook (such as newspapers, magazines, maps, charts, or cartoons)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
d. Fill out worksheets	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
e. Write reports	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
f. Discuss current events	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
g. Watch television shows, videos, or filmstrips in class	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
h. Discuss television shows, videos, or filmstrips	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
i. Take part in debates or panel discussions	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
j. Take part in role-playing, mock trials, or dramas	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
k. Write a letter to give your opinion or help solve a community problem	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
l. Have visits from people in your community to learn about important events and ideas	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C

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VB610546

4. This year in school, how often have you been asked to write long answers to questions or assignments that involved civics or government?

☐ Ⓐ Never

☐ Ⓑ Once or twice this year

☐ Ⓒ Once or twice a month

☐ Ⓓ At least once a week

VB595262

5. This year, how often have you used computers at school for studying civics or government?

☐ Ⓐ Never or hardly ever

☐ Ⓑ Once every few weeks

☐ Ⓒ About once a week

☐ Ⓓ Two or three times a week

☐ Ⓔ Every day

☐ Ⓕ I haven't studied civics or government this year

VB595263

6. Think about all the courses since the ninth grade in which you have studied civics or government. To what extent have you used computers to do research projects about topics in civics or government using a CD or the Internet? Include both work in class and homework assignments.

☐ Ⓐ Not at all

☐ Ⓑ Small extent

☐ Ⓒ Moderate extent

☐ Ⓓ Large extent

ID100232

7. Have you taken or are you currently taking the College Board Advanced Placement course in United States Government and Politics?

☐ Ⓐ Yes

☐ Ⓑ No

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K070697

QVB595182

8. How much education do you think you will complete?

- Ⓐ I will not finish high school.
- Ⓑ I will graduate from high school.
- Ⓒ I will have some education after high school.
- Ⓓ I will graduate from college.
- Ⓔ I will go to graduate school.
- Ⓕ I don't know.

VC101417

9. What do you expect that your main activity will be in the year after you leave high school?

- Ⓐ Working full time
- Ⓑ Attending a vocational, technical, or business school
- Ⓒ Attending a two-year college
- Ⓓ Attending a four-year college, service academy, or university
- Ⓔ Serving in the military
- Ⓕ Other

10. How hard was this test compared to most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- Ⓐ Easier than other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than other tests

VC034559

11. How hard did you try on this test compared to how hard you tried on most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- Ⓐ Not as hard as on other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as on other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than on other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than on other tests

VB595184

12. How important was it to you to do well on this test?

- Ⓐ Not very important
- Ⓑ Somewhat important
- Ⓒ Important
- Ⓓ Very important



# Student Background Questionnaire

## U.S. History—Grade 12

This section has 13 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet. Unless directed otherwise, fill in only one oval for each question.

LC000126

1. Did you take a United States history course in the following grades? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes	No	I don't know
a. 9th grade	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
b. 10th grade	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
c. 11th grade	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C

2. Are you taking a United States history course now?

- ☐ A Yes  
☐ B No

VB598171

3. Since the beginning of middle school or junior high school, how much have you studied the following periods of United States history? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Not at all	Some	A lot
a. The period before 1815: beginnings through the Revolution (e.g., colonization, settlement, revolution)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
b. The period between 1815 and 1865: the new nation through the Civil War (e.g., expansion, reform, crisis of the Union)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
c. The period between 1865 and 1945: the development of modern America (e.g., Reconstruction, industrial growth, United States role in world affairs, the Great Depression, the First and Second World Wars, immigration)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
d. The period between 1945 and the present: contemporary America (e.g., civil rights movement, women's rights movement, Korean and Vietnam wars, environmental movement)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C

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VB598095

4. When you study history or social studies in school, how often do you do each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	About every day
a. Read material from a textbook	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
b. Read extra material not in the regular textbook (e.g., biographies or historical stories)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
c. Use letters, diaries, or essays written by historical people	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
d. Discuss the material studied	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
e. Write short answers (a paragraph or less) to questions	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
f. Write a report	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
g. Work on a group project	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
h. Give a report on the topic being studied	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
i. Watch movies, videos, or filmstrips	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
j. Take a test or quiz	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
k. Go on field trips or have outside speakers	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E
l. Schoolwork in the library	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E

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VB598168

5. This year in school, how often have you been asked to write long answers to questions or assignments for history or social studies?

☐ (A) Never

☐ (B) Once or twice this year

☐ (C) Once or twice a month

☐ (D) At least once a week

VB598177

6. This year, how often have you used computers at school for studying history or social studies?

☐ (A) Never or hardly ever

☐ (B) Once every few weeks

☐ (C) About once a week

☐ (D) Two or three times a week

☐ (E) Every day

☐ (F) I haven't studied history this year

VB598178

7. Think about all the courses since the ninth grade in which you have studied history or social studies. To what extent have you used computers to do research projects about topics in history or social studies using a CD or the Internet? Include both work in class and homework assignments.

☐ (A) Not at all

☐ (B) Small extent

☐ (C) Moderate extent

☐ (D) Large extent

VB598179

8. Are you currently enrolled in or have you taken an Advanced Placement course in U. S. History?

☐ (A) Yes

☐ (B) No

QK070697

9. How much education do you think you will complete?

☐ (A) I will not finish high school.

☐ (B) I will graduate from high school.

☐ (C) I will have some education after high school.

☐ (D) I will graduate from college.

☐ (E) I will go to graduate school.

☐ (F) I don't know.

VC101417

10. What do you expect that your main activity will be in the year after you leave high school?

☐ (A) Working full time

☐ (B) Attending a vocational, technical, or business school

☐ (C) Attending a two-year college

☐ (D) Attending a four-year college, service academy, or university

☐ (E) Serving in the military

☐ (F) Other

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VB595182

11. How hard was this test compared to most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- Ⓐ Easier than other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than other tests

VC034559

12. How hard did you try on this test compared to how hard you tried on most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- Ⓐ Not as hard as on other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as on other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than on other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than on other tests

VB595184

13. How important was it to you to do well on this test?

- Ⓐ Not very important
- Ⓑ Somewhat important
- Ⓒ Important
- Ⓓ Very important

